

Exeter Plan

Duty to Cooperate Evidence: Addendum

May 2026

Exeter City Council
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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 During the Exeter Plan Hearing session for Matter 1: Issue 1 (3 March 2026), the Inspectors asked the Council to provide additional proportionate detail about joint working and the duty to cooperate. This document has been prepared in the context of the Government revoking the Duty to Cooperate on 25 March 2026, after the initial Hearing was held.
- 1.2 The document responds to the Inspectors' request. Specifically, it supplements the Duty to Cooperate Statement (DTC-01) and Duty to Cooperate Log (EXM-02u) by providing proportionate details of all meetings of the Greater Exeter Project Advisory Group (PAG).
- 1.3 PAG meetings are attended by the Planning and/or Planning Policy Service Leads for Exeter City Council, East Devon District Council, Mid Devon District Council, Teignbridge District Council and Devon County Council (DCC), together with other 'Greater Exeter' local authority officers as appropriate. PAG meetings have provided the forum for extensive local authority co-operation and joint working on cross-boundary planning matters.
- 1.4 The PAG was established in 2017, at a time when the four district authorities were preparing the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) in partnership with DCC. Work on the GESP ended in 2020, but PAG meetings continued to take place frequently until 2024. During that four year period, meetings initially focused on the Joint Strategy which, when finalised, was named 'Our Shared Coordinates' ([DTC-02](#)), before moving on to more thematic discussions for the various local plans emerging in the area. Since 2024, cross-boundary discussions between the local authorities have tended to be in the form of topic-specific meetings, workshops and/or emails, as evidenced in the Duty to Cooperate Log (EXM-02u). The log in section 2 of this document summarises the cross-boundary matters discussed at each PAG meeting.
- 1.5 PAG is referred to in paragraph 3.8 of the Duty to Cooperate Statement (DTC-01: page 5). Some PAG meetings are already included in the Duty to Cooperate Log (EXM-02u). Where that is the case, the meeting is marked in section 2 of this document by an asterisk.
- 1.6 The PAG Terms of Reference are attached as Appendix A to this note. They set out PAG's role in steering cross-boundary matters in relation to the GESP, as per the group's original focus.

2.0 Log of Greater Exeter PAG meetings

Date	Type of discussion	Cross-boundary matters discussed
13 March 2017	In person	PAG terms of reference, housing, economy, viability, heritage, flood risk, energy and low carbon and landscape evidence/strategy/ initiatives.
10 April 2017	In person	Viability, flood risk, landscape evidence, transport, retail and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).
15 May 2017	In person	Transport.
5 June 2017	In person	Housing, energy and low carbon and HRA.
3 July 2017	In person	Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), transport and communications.
21 August 2017	In person	HELAA, economy and retail.
18 September 2017	In person	HELAA, housing, economy, viability and transport.
24 October 2017	In person	Housing and transport.
20 November 2017	In person	Housing, transport, communications and infrastructure.
18 December 2017	In person	Housing.
15 January 2018	In person	HELAA.
12 February 2018	In person	HELAA, housing, economy, landscape and energy and low carbon.
12 March 2018	In person	Sustainability appraisal, HELAA, housing, transport, communications and landscape.
9 April 2018	In person	Infrastructure.
9 May 2018	In person	Economy, energy and low carbon and infrastructure.
18 June 2018	In person	Housing, communications, HRA and infrastructure.
16 July 2018	In person	Housing, employment, transport and communications.
20 August 2018	In person	Employment, energy and low carbon and HRA.
24 September 2018	In person	Energy and low carbon.
15 October 2018	In person	Housing.
3 December 2018	In person	Housing and infrastructure.
21 January 2019	In person	Viability, infrastructure, retail, biodiversity and design.
4 March 2019	In person	Housing.
15 April 2019	In person	Housing, employment, transport, viability and infrastructure.
17 June 2019	In person	HELAA, housing, HRA and viability evidence/strategy/initiatives.

Date	Type of discussion	Cross-boundary matters discussed
15 July 2019	In person	Sustainability appraisal, housing, sports facilities, communications, net zero and infrastructure.
19 August 2019	In person	Sustainability appraisal, sports facilities, communications, air quality, health and infrastructure.
16 September 2019	In person	Housing, sports facilities, air quality, ancient woodland and viability.
21 October 2019	In person	Housing, retail, biodiversity low carbon and viability.
18 November 2019	In person	Housing, net zero, ancient woodland and viability.
3 February 2020	In person	Housing, retail, net zero, ancient woodland and viability.
9 March 2020	In person	Transport.
14 April 2020	Online	Low carbon, communications, housing, sports facilities, viability
4 May 2020	Online	Transport, communications, housing
1 June 2020	Online	Sustainability Appraisal, HRA, transport, viability.
6 July 2020	Online	Housing.
4 August 2020	Online	End of work on the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP), housing
7 September 2020	Online	Early thought to preparation of a joint strategy to replace the GESP.
5 October 2020	Online	Joint strategy.
2 November 2020	Online	Joint strategy, economy, housing
17 December 2020	Online	Joint strategy, economy, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.
1 February 2021	Online	Joint strategy, economy, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, viability.
8 February 2021	Online	Joint strategy.
1 March 2021	Online	Joint strategy, economy, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.
12 April 2021	Online	Joint strategy, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.
7 June 2021	Online	Joint strategy, economy, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.
5 July 2021*	Online	Joint strategy, economy, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, sports facilities, health.
2 August 2021*	Online	Joint strategy, health, habitats mitigation, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.
6 September 2021	Online	Joint strategy, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation.
4 October 2021*	Online	Joint strategy, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, employment.
1 November 2021	Online	Joint strategy.
6 December 2021	Online	Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, housing.
10 January 2022	Online	Joint strategy, employment, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, habitats mitigation.

Date	Type of discussion	Cross-boundary matters discussed
7 February 2022	Online	Joint strategy, employment, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, habitats mitigation.
7 March 2022	Online	Joint strategy, employment, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, habitats mitigation.
4 April 2022	Online	Joint strategy, employment, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, habitats mitigation.
9 May 2022	Online	Joint strategy, employment, housing, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, habitats mitigation, health.
1 August 2022	Online	Joint strategy.
22 September 2022	Online	Joint strategy.
19 October 2022	Online	Joint strategy, transport, housing.
5 December 2022	Online	Joint strategy, transport, education, utilities, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, employment.
9 January 2023	Online	Joint strategy, employment.
6 February 2023	Online	Joint strategy, utilities.
6 March 2023	Online	Education, transport.
3 April 2023	Online	Joint strategy, transport, climate change, employment, biodiversity,
24 April 2023	Online	Joint strategy, transport, employment.
4 September 2023*	Online	Transport.
2 October 2023	Online	Joint strategy, transport.
4 December 2023*	Online	Transport.
5 February 2024	Online	Joint strategy, transport, Gypsy and Traveller accommodation

Greater Exeter Strategic Plan – Project Assurance Group

Terms of Reference

Introduction

The Local Authorities in the Greater Exeter area are working on the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP). The GESP will cover the following Local Planning Authority areas:

- East Devon;
- Exeter;
- Mid Devon; and
- Teignbridge.

Devon County Council and the Exeter and East Devon Growth Point have been invited to be partners in this joint planning work. Together these are termed the 'Partner Authorities'.

The GESP will be a statutory planning document, setting out the strategic elements of planning policy. It will cover the period to 2040 in the context of a longer horizon to 2045.

GESP governance

The principal governance for the GESP includes the following:

- Planning officer resource:

Working on evidence development and plan preparation. This resource was initially provided through a number of interlinked working groups on a thematic basis. From April 2017, and over time, there has been a move to reorganise this resource into a GESP team with involvement from each of the Local Authorities. The GESP team is led by a team manager.

- Project Assurance Group:

Senior group with representation from each of the Partner Authorities. Provides regular steer and decision making on detailed matters to the GESP team.

- Project Board:

Principal officers meeting from each of the Partner Authorities which oversees the project and drives its progress. Includes the Project Executive, senior user and the senior supplier roles. The Board has the senior officer decision-making role.

- Member Steering Group:

Primary Member Group which steers the progression of the plan and secures political engagement. The Member Steering Group has a decision-making role in relation to content which will advance to Committee.

- Informal advisory Member reference forum:

Advisory forum to consider and make comments on draft plan proposals before they are formally considered by each council.

- Local Planning Authority Committees:

Individual Authority decision-making forums for key stages of the plan including consultations.

This wider governance structure is set out in Appendix A.

Representation

The Project Assurance Group includes a single representative from each of the Partner Authorities at Chief Planner/Head of Planning level or equivalent. Such representation is in addition to the senior suppliers. Other representatives from the Partner Authorities may be invited to attend the meeting as required.

The Group is chaired by a Local Authority officer from the Project Board who occupies the senior supplier role.

Roles and responsibilities

The Project Assurance Group has a number of roles and responsibilities as follows:

- Represent the partner Authorities in the ongoing progress with the project;
- Make decisions (officer level) on project timelines and key milestones to feed into the Board;
- Make decisions (officer level) on Statutory process matters to feed into the Board;
- Agree methodology and approaches to evidence preparation to feed into the Board;
- Make decisions (officer level) on strategy development to feed into the Board;
- Review briefs for work to be undertaken or commissioned (the PAG can delegate this role to the GESP Team Manager for specific briefs when agreed).
- Review drafts of evidence documents and agree signoff;
- Make decisions (officer level) on Plan drafts and revisions to feed into the Board;
- Secure resources and budgets and agree key spending; and
- Provide a link between the GESP and local planning matters.

Decision-making

Decision-making will be by consensus. If there are disagreements relating to substantive matters affecting plan progress or fundamental elements of the plan, matters will be referred to the Project Board for discussion and senior decision-making.

Financial matters

The Project Assurance Group will have a role in securing funding for the GESP, particularly from Local Authority budgets. The formal role in terms of making funding available to the GESP continues to rest with the individual Cabinets and Executives of the Local Authorities.

Administration and support

Written notice of meetings, along with the agenda and associated papers, will be sent to representatives five days in advance of any meeting. Late items may be distributed when considered appropriate by the Chair.

Meetings will be held at least monthly or as required to discuss particular matters. The meetings will be hosted at County Hall, Exeter, or as otherwise agreed.

APPENDIX A:

Greater Exeter Strategic Plan – Governance Structure

